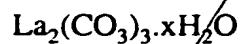


CLAIMS

1. A pharmaceutical composition for the treatment of hyperphosphataemia, comprising lanthanum carbonate of formula



where x has a value from 3 to 6, in admixture or association with a pharmaceutically acceptable diluent or carrier.

2. A composition according to claim 1, wherein in the lanthanum carbonate, x has a value from 3.5 to 5.

3. A composition according to claim 2, wherein in the lanthanum carbonate, x has a value from 3.8 to 4.5.

4. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 3, in a form suitable for oral administration.

5. A composition according to any one of claims 1 to 3, in unit dosage form to provide from 0.1 to 20g/day.

6. The use of lanthanum carbonate as defined in any one of claims 1 to 3, for the preparation of a medicament for the treatment of hyperphosphataemia by administration into the gastrointestinal tract.

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Amendment

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7. A process for the preparation of lanthanum carbonate as defined in any one of claims 1 to 3 which comprises the steps of:

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- (i) reacting lanthanum oxide with hydrochloric acid to obtain lanthanum chloride;
- (ii) reacting a solution of the thus obtained lanthanum chloride with an alkali metal carbonate to produce a wet cake of lanthanum carbonate octahydrate; and
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- (iii) controlled drying of the wet cake of lanthanum carbonate octahydrate so as to obtain a lanthanum carbonate with 3 to 6 molecules of water of crystallisation.

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8.

A process as claimed in claim ~~7~~⁵ wherein the alkali metal carbonate is sodium carbonate.

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9. Lanthanum carbonate prepared according to the process of claim 7 or 8.

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